CLAIMS

We claim:

1.   One or more data signals collectively conveying an IP message, the IP message containing:

logic for testing digital content capabilities of a receiving computer system; and

logic for displaying one of a plurality of versions of a digital content advertising message selected based on the results of testing digital content capabilities of the receiving computer system,

such that a receiving computer system may use the contents of the IP message to display a version of the digital content advertising message based upon digital content capabilities of the receiving computer system.

2.   The data signals of claim 1 wherein the logic is directly contained in the IP message.

3.   The data signals of claim 1 wherein the logic is included in the IP message by reference.

4.   The data signals of claim 1 wherein the displayed version of the digital content advertising message is not directly included in the IP message, but is separately transferred under the control of the logic for displaying.

5.   The data signals of claim 1 wherein the displayed version of the digital content advertising message is downloaded by the logic for displaying, and is downloaded in a form customized for an addressee of the IP message.

6.   A method in a computing system for presenting an adaptive message, comprising:

receiving a message in the computer system; and

based on the contents of the received message:

testing two or more digital content capabilities of the computer system;

selecting one of a plurality of different digital content elements based upon the results of the testing; and

presenting the selected rich media element.

7.   The method of claim 6 wherein the plurality of digital content elements includes a high-quality video sequence and a low-quality video sequence.

8.   The method of claim 6 wherein the plurality of digital content elements includes a video sequence and an animation sequence.

9.   The method of claim 6 wherein the plurality of digital content elements includes a first digital content element constructed for playing on a first player and a second digital content element constructed for playing on a second player different from the first player.

10.   The method of claim 6 wherein the selected digital content elements is selected based upon actions of a user of the computer system in connection with one or more earlier IP messages for presenting a digital content message.

11.   One or more computer memories, collectively containing an adaptive media package data structure, comprising:

a stored version of an IP message containing both a first layer of the adaptive media package and instructions for replacing the first layer with an additional layer;

a stored version of additional layers of the adaptive media package, a first additional layer containing a first version of an digital content element, a second additional layer containing a second version of the same digital content element,

such that the contents of the data structure may be used to send an email message to a recipient, and satisfy a request from the recipient for one of the additional layers.

12.   The computer memories of claim 11 wherein each of the stored versions of additional layers of the adaptive media package comprises:

a universal portion of the additional layer containing contents of the layer that do not vary between recipients; and

stored separately from the universal portion of the additional layer, a user-specific portion of the additional layer containing contents of the layer than can vary between recipients,

such that the universal and user-specific portions of one of the additional layers may be combined to satisfy a request from the recipient for the additional layer.

13.   The computer memories of claim 12 wherein a different user-specific portion is stored for each of the additional layers.

14.   The computer memories of claim 12 wherein a the same user-specific portion is stored for all of the additional layers.

15. The computer memories of claim 11 wherein the stored versions of the IP message and the additional layers are modifiable templates, such that they are designed to be modified in a way that customizes them for recipients.

16. The computer memories of claim 15 wherein the templates may be modified to include information identifying a recipient in the addresses of links included in the IP message and additional layers.

17. The computer memories of claim 15 wherein the templates may be modified to include information designed to appeal specifically to a particular recipient.

18. A method for authoring an adaptive media message, comprising:

receiving an original version of digital content content; and

encoding the original version of digital content content into a plurality of digital content elements.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the plurality of digital content elements include digital content elements constructed for different media player programs.

20. The method of claim 18, wherein the plurality of digital content elements include digital content elements having different data transfer requirements.

21. The method of claim 18, further comprising:

receiving visual context data for the digital content content; and

for each digital content element encoded, using the received visual context data to generate a visual context for the digital content content that incorporates the digital content element.

22.   The method of claim 21, further comprising delivering one of the generated visual contexts to a user based upon configuration details of a computer system used by the user.

23.   A method in a computing system for serving digital content elements, comprising:

receiving a digital content element request requesting an identified digital content element;

extracting from the received request an identifier for a user on whose behalf the request was issued;

retrieving behavioral information for the identified user;

based on the retrieved behavioral information, selecting a version of the identified digital content element that best suits the identified user; and

returning the selected version of the identified digital content element.

24.   A method in a computing system for summarizing the results of sending an IP message delivering a media sequence to a recipient, comprising:

determining the total number of times the IP message was opened;

determining the total number of times viewing of the media sequence was initiated; and

determining, for each time viewing of the media sequence was initiated, the extent to which the entire media sequence was viewed.

25.   The method of claim 24 wherein the IP message contains a number of links each encoded with an identifier identifying the recipient, and

wherein link dereference requests containing the identifier are used in to make the determinations.

26. The method of claim 24 wherein the IP message contains at least one link, the method further comprising determining, for each link contained in the email message, the total number of times the link was traversed.

27. The method of claim 24 wherein the IP message is delivered to a plurality of recipients, and wherein the determinations are performed for each of the plurality of recipients, the method further comprising aggregating the results of the determinations across the plurality of recipients.

28. A computer-readable medium whose contents cause a computer system to generate an IP message by:

receiving an invocation request specifying a recipient email address;

merging the recipient IP address, as well as a recipient identifier uniquely identifying the recipient, into a message template to form a complete IP message; and

returning the formed IP message in response to the invocation request.

29. The computer-readable medium of claim 28 wherein the merging merges the recipient identifier into one or more links included in the message template to facilitate tracking the dereferencing of the included links by the recipient in the formed IP message.

30. The computer-readable medium of claim 28 wherein the formed IP message conveys a digital content element.

31. The computer-readable medium of claim 28 wherein the formed IP message conveys a digital content element that adapts to the capabilities of the recipient's computer system.

32. A computing system for sharing email response data, comprising:

an email support server that receives requests from identified recipients of an email campaign and compiles information about the received requests; and

a customer information repository computer system communicatively connected to the email support server, the customer information repository computer system maintaining a repository of information about each of a number of customers to which the email campaign was directed, receiving from the email support server information about the received requests, and incorporating into the repository the received information about the received requests.

33. The computing system of claim 32 wherein the customer information repository constitutes the state of a CRM application.

34. One or more data signals collectively conveying an IP message, the IP message containing:

logic for testing capabilities of a receiving computer system; and

logic for displaying one of a plurality of versions of a message selected based on the results of testing capabilities of the receiving computer system,

such that a receiving computer system may use the contents of the IP message to display a version of the message based upon capabilities of the receiving computer system.

35. A method in a computing system for generating a multi-layered message, comprising:

soliciting user input specifying address information;

soliciting user input specifying dynamic message content; and

using a selected message definition and the solicited user input to generate a multi-layered message addressed in accordance with the user input specifying address information and containing a plurality of layers, each layer constituting an alternate version of message content specified by the message definition, and each layer incorporating the dynamic message content specified by the user input specifying dynamic message content.

36. The method of claim 35, further comprising soliciting user input selecting the selected message definition from among a plurality of message definitions.

37. The method of claim 35, further comprising transmitting the generated multi-layered message in accordance with the user input specifying address information.

38. A method in a computing system for tracking the results of sending an IP message delivering media element to a recipient, the IP message providing access to a plurality of different version of the media element, comprising:

displaying addressee information for the IP message; and

displaying information indicating how the addressee has interacted with the IP message, including information indicating which of the different versions of the media element have been rendered to the addressee.

39. The method of claim 38 wherein each version of the media element is contained in a different layer of the IP message, and wherein the

displayed information indicating how the addressee has interacted with the IP message includes information indicating which of the layers of the IP message the addressee has viewed.